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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D. C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

4 September 1989

Iraq: Nuclear Weapons-Related Procurement Activities

Summary

We believe Iraq gives high priority to acquiring a nuclear weapons capability to counter perceived military threats from Iran and Israel, and Baghdad's purchasing activities--especially through worldwide covert channels--strongly suggest that a weapons program exists. These procurement efforts are essential to Iraq's ability to produce a nuclear weapon.

President Saddam Husayn's close confidant, Husayn Kamil al-Majid--who is a driving force in Baghdad's long-range missile, chemical, and biological weapons programs--appears to be in charge of the nuclear procurement effort. The nuclear network--part of a larger military procurement effort controlled by Majid's Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization and his Special Security organization--uses Iraqi public sector enterprises, international front companies, foreign agents, and probably even the civilian Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission. The Iraqis currently are focussing on procurement of enrichment and reprocessing technology and material, and diagnostic equipment. The network's methods, especially the extensive use of covert techniques in Western Europe, are similar to those employed by other states pursuing a nuclear weapons capability.

Since the Israeli bombing of the Osirak research reactor at the Tuwaiha Nuclear Research Center in June 1981, we have noted a strong Iraqi effort to hide nuclear-related activities and avoid international attention. Recent allegations in the international press about Iraq's nuclear program almost certainly will encourage Baghdad to take additional measures to conceal its procurement activities, probably by making even more extensive use of front companies and foreign agents.

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~~TOP SECRET~~ ~~NOFORN NOCONTRACT PROPIN~~The Procurement Network

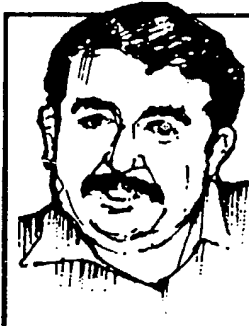
Baghdad's aggressive use of covert procurement techniques to acquire controlled nuclear-related materials and technologies from suppliers in Western Europe and South America reinforces our belief that Iraq is exploring a nuclear weapons option. Baghdad's procurement activities closely resemble the piecemeal acquisition practices used by [] other states to support covert nuclear weapons-related development. []

[] Husayn Kamil al-Majid, President Saddam Husayn's son-in-law and cousin, directs the covert nuclear procurement effort through his control of the Ministry of Industry and Military Industrialization and the Special Security organization, a palace-based security and intelligence service that has principal responsibility for overseeing Iraq's extensive gray market activities abroad.² These organizations, which have been used extensively to support Iraq's other unconventional and conventional weapons programs, are used to target some of the hardware and technology necessary to support a program capable of producing a nuclear explosives device. []

As head of military industrialization, Majid has direct control over several quasi-governmental organizations that we have identified in numerous conventional and unconventional weapons procurement activities. The Technical Corporation for Special Projects (TECO), created by Saddam as early as mid-1986 to manage high-priority military projects such as chemical weapons, antimissile, and long-range missile programs, is heavily involved in nuclear-related procurement and reports to the Special Projects department of the ministry, according to special intelligence. Majid originally headed TECO and continues to oversee its activities closely. [] We believe the Special Projects department also oversees the ministry's technical office "Safan"--a close affiliate of TECO that is also implicated in the nuclear procurement effort []

Husayn Kamil al-Majid: Honchoing the Procurement Effort []

Husayn Kamil al-Majid, who has been involved in nuclear procurement activities since at least the mid-1980s, is probably the second most powerful man in Iraq after President Saddam Husayn. As a son-in-law and paternal cousin to Saddam, he is the only cabinet officer that the President trusts completely. [] Although Majid's relationship to Saddam almost certainly gave him his start in government, we attribute his current high status to his demonstrated loyalty to the President and strong record of accomplishments. In his work with Iraq's ballistic missile and chemical weapons programs, Majid has demonstrated a talent for mobilizing, organizing, and motivating Iraq's scientific and technological community. [] He relies on financial incentives, close supervision of his subordinates, and coercion to press doggedly for his goals. []



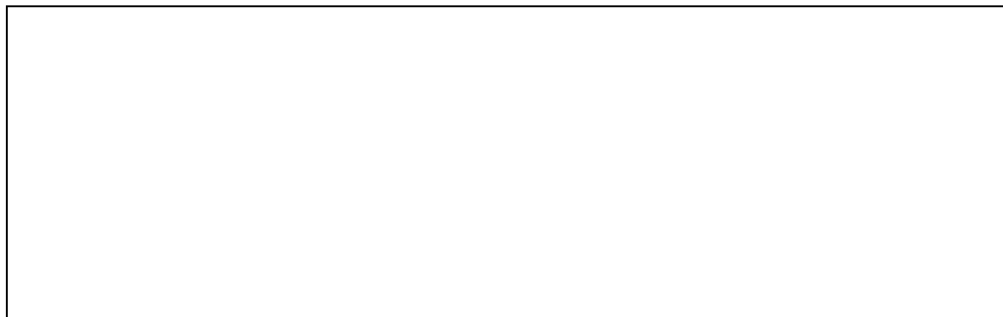
Majid, who is about 35, rose from a low-level security official to become director of the Special Security organization, Saddam's personal security arm. He was later tasked by Saddam with running a number of armaments factories during the final stages of the war with Iran; he made dramatic improvements in production performance. [] He played a key role, as head of the Technical Corporation for Special Projects, in deploying the medium-range missile that took the war to Tehran late in the conflict, establishing his reputation as a capable manager while opening new responsibilities for him in nuclear-related activities. []

2 Gray market procurement refers to purchasing techniques designed to obfuscate the true end use or end user of goods involved in a transaction. (CNP)

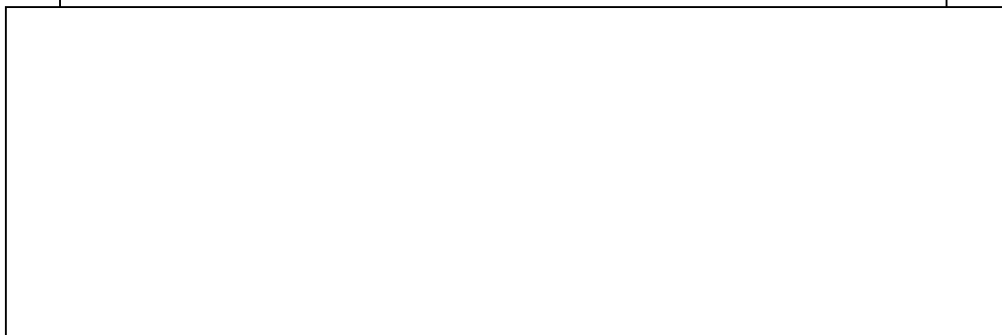
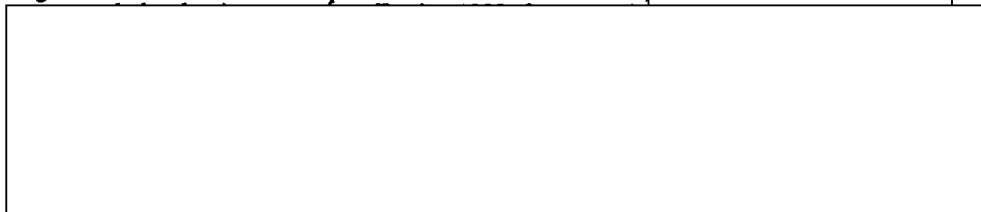
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TECO uses several Iraqi public sector enterprises and other quasi-governmental organizations in its efforts to procure nuclear-related items



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Other government ministries almost certainly are involved in the procurement of dual-use nuclear-related equipment and technology [redacted]

Front Companies and Foreign Agents

Some of the front companies and foreign citizens associated with Iraq's defense-related procurement industry also are involved in attempts to acquire nuclear-related material and technology [redacted] Baghdad clearly uses these agents to conceal Iraqi interest in obtaining materials that contribute to a nuclear weapons program. [redacted]

Baghdad's agents and front companies in Western Europe are concentrating their nuclear-related efforts on acquiring technology and material for ultra-high-speed centrifuges used to enrich uranium. [redacted]

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[]
Even President Saddam Husayn has been involved in the search for centrifuge technology. []

[]
Iraq is also using gray market brokers in attempts to buy low-enriched uranium, which can be used as feed for a centrifuge plant. []

[] We believe the uranium is of little use to Iraq's peaceful nuclear program at this time, as none of Iraq's known existing reactors runs on low enriched fuel. Access to low enriched uranium would allow the Iraqis to reduce significantly the time and effort required to enrich uranium to weapons grade levels. []

The Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission

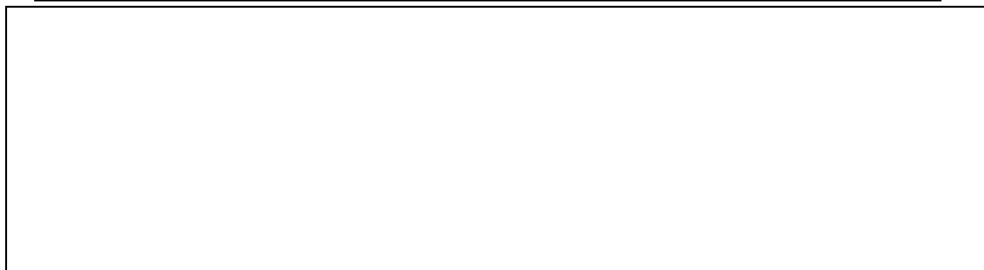
The Iraqi Atomic Energy Commission (IAEC) handles the bulk of Iraq's legitimate purchasing requirements for nuclear technology and material, including nuclear fuel reprocessing equipment and training applicable to nuclear weapons development. The Tuwaitha Nuclear Research Center has a pilot-scale reprocessing capability at its Italian-built laboratories which, if reconfigured, could reprocess enough material for slightly more than one bomb per year, according to technical experts at the Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest Laboratory. We have no reporting, however, that indicates Iraq has reconfigured its equipment or has a supply of unsafeguarded spent fuel to feed such a mechanism. []

The Commission's inquiries and orders to foreign firms include requests for dual-use items that, at the very least, would allow Iraq to develop the technical infrastructure and expertise necessary to support a nuclear weapons development capability. Special intelligence has chronicled numerous IAEC inquiries for dual-use items over the past two years that, in our view, are probably being used for weapons development rather than peaceful purposes:

[]

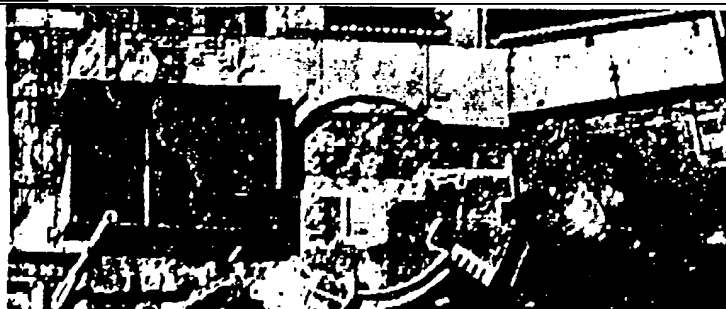
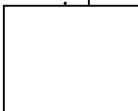
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Iraq: Bringing Osirak Back on Line

The Israeli air strike against the Osirak research reactor at Tuwaitha in 1981 was a major setback to Iraq's nuclear program, but Baghdad has made significant strides recently in the reconstruction of the reactor.



With some significant fuel modifications and an adequate fuel supply, Osirak would be capable of providing weapons-grade plutonium. Iraq has signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, however, and known sources of fuel for Osirak are under IAEA safeguards and inspected regularly, most recently in March. Still, Iraq's flagrant disregard for the Geneva protocol prohibiting the use of chemical weapons in war suggests that President Saddam would not refrain from covertly conducting proscribed nuclear activities.

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Outlook

We believe the covert nuclear procurement network is essential to Iraq's ability to produce a nuclear weapon. Baghdad probably will focus its procurement efforts on Western Europe [] in preference to US firms, because most West European countries have less stringent licensing laws and export control enforcement than the United States. Baghdad is also likely to seize on other procurement opportunities elsewhere. []

Based on our assessment of the status of Iraq's nuclear program, we judge that the weapons-related equipment and technologies that the Iraqis almost certainly would need to pursue over the next few years include:

- Fissile material production technology to establish a uranium enrichment capability and complete a reactor for plutonium production.
- Weapons diagnostics equipment, such as high speed cameras, oscilloscopes, and X-ray machines.
- High explosive, hydrodynamic, and neutronic computer codes for weapons modeling.
- Sophisticated electronics and components for weaponization. []

It is clear that Baghdad has increased efforts to cover up its nuclear-related procurement activities since the Israeli bombing of the Osirak research reactor at the Tuwaita Nuclear Research Center in June 1981. Recent allegations in the international press about renewed progress in Iraq's nuclear program have raised new fears in Baghdad about the possibility of another Israeli attack. []

[] As a result, Iraq is certain to take additional measures to conceal its procurement activities, probably by making more extensive use of front companies and foreign agents controlled by Majid's ministry and intelligence organizations. Given Iraq's concern over potential military threats from Iran and Israel, we doubt that international pressure would dissuade Baghdad from its goal of establishing a nuclear weapons capability. []

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Overseas Front Companies and Individuals Involved in
Iraq's Nuclear Procurement Effort

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IRAQ: Nuclear-related Procurement Network

